

Water talks start today amid high hopes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Water sharing of the Teesta river will dominate the secretary level talks of the Joint Rivers Commission starting today.

The two-day talks Dhaka and Delhi are the culmination of an expert committee deliberations on the issue in December last year. Bangladesh is hopeful to reach an agreement at the talks.

Dhaka has already submitted a draft agreement proposal to India through foreign ministry in this regard.

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Hasina's visit to open a new chapter

Indian envoy tells Dipu Moni

DIPLOMATIC CORRESPONDENT

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's upcoming visit to India would usher in a new era of Indo-Bangladesh relations and substantially widen the scopes of cooperation between the two countries, said Foreign Minister Dipu Moni yesterday.

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Millions living by the Teesta now have expectation that the secretary-level talks with India will lead to a fair deal on water sharing of this river. Inset, the river enters Bangladesh in Nilphamari on its way to meet the Brahmaputra in Kurigram. PHOTO: SK ENAMUL HAQ

Teesta flows in thin

Barrage, dams in India shrink the river most in February

PINAKI ROY and RAFIQ SARKER

The flow of water on the Teesta has weakened significantly in last 24 years for Gajoldoba barrage and some dams built by India in the river's upper basin.

In February and March, it comes down to less than 1,000 cubic feet per second, from 5,000 cubic feet per second in December and January.

At times, it shrinks even further, say

sources at the Water Development Board's hydrology department.

For instance, they add, the amount of water dropped to 370 cusec (cubic foot per second) in February 2007.

The water flow in the month used to be 4,000 cusec at the minimum before India built Gajoldoba barrage, some 70 kilometres upstream from Dalia point in Nilphamari in 1985.

This steep drop in the volume of water

is because of India holding almost all water during the lean period.

This trend, continuing over the years, means sufferings to thousands of people living downstream and affecting the ecology in the northern districts.

"When the flow plummets to 400 or 370 cubic feet a second, it means little water passes through Gajoldoba barrage. This 400 cusec water is regenerated

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No more unplanned housing in Dhaka

Asserts PM; says minister under threat for saving water bodies, playgrounds

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said miscreants are threatening one of her cabinet members for pursuing government move to preserve water bodies and playgrounds in the city, as these are disappearing for unauthorised building constructions.

She said the threat to the minister concerned with housing works came as the government has decided not to give permission for any housing project if the developing companies do not incorporate in their projects preservation of existing water bodies and play-

grounds.

Hasina made the disclosure while addressing the inaugural ceremony of the two-day 3rd International Conference on Bangladesh Environment (ICBEN) 2010 at Osmani Memorial Auditorium.

Explaining a latest recipe for building a new look expanded capital, she said the government has decided to divide Dhaka into various zones and expand the city on the zoning basis.

"This time we will not allow anybody to construct buildings here and there," she said, indicating what is satirically called 'concrete jungle'.

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JS sits today without BNP

President to outline govt's successes

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Jatiya Sangsad goes into new year session today with the BNP-led opposition continuing its boycott of the House since its second session in June last year.

President Zillur Rahman is scheduled to address the opening sitting of fourth session of the Sangsad outlining success of the Awami League-led government.

Earlier, the opposition lawmakers had also boycotted the

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Tigers face Lankans today

SPORTS REPORTER

Young paceman Shaiful Islam will make his debut for Bangladesh when the Tigers take on Sri Lanka in the opening match of the Idea Cup triangular ODI series at the

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5TH AMENDMENT

SC lifts stay on verdict

Hears 2 petitions Jan 18

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

The Supreme Court (SC) yesterday lifted its four-year old stay order on a High Court (HC) verdict that had declared illegal and unconstitutional the fifth amendment to the country's constitution.

The amendment had legitimised all governments that had been in power following the coup of August 15, 1975 till April 9, 1979 including late president Ziaur Rahman's ascension to the presidency.

The SC Appellate Division yesterday also allowed withdrawal by the incumbent government and Muktiyoddha Kalyan Trust of two leave to appeal petitions against the HC verdict.

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BANGABANDHU VERDICT

Death warrants issued for 5

COURT CORRESPONDENT

A Dhaka court yesterday issued death warrants against five convicted killers of Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

Judge Md Abdul Gafur of the District and Sessions Judge's Court issued the warrants.

The court sent the death warrants in a red envelop to the senior jail super of Dhaka Central Jail directing him to take necessary steps to officially inform the confirmation of death penalty to the five convicts in the prison.

Meantime, Inspector General (prisons) Brigadier General Ashrafur Islam Khan told The Daily Star that he received the death warrants at 3:00pm yesterday and the convicts were

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Congratulations

We congratulate Fazole Hasan Abed, Founder and Chairperson of BRAC and a past Chairman, Board of Directors of Delta Brac Housing Finance Corporation Ltd (DBH) on the announcement that he is to be knighted by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for services in tackling poverty and empowering the poor in Bangladesh and more globally.

Fazole Hasan Abed is to be appointed Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George (KCMG), and is the first person of Bangladesh origin to be honoured with a knighthood by the British Crown since 1947. The award is a recognition and testament to the vision, courage and dynamism of Fazole Hasan Abed, and to his work spanning four decades in education, health, human rights and social development, and for bringing financial services to the doorstep of millions of the poor in an effort to eradicate poverty in Bangladesh and countries in Asia and Africa.



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